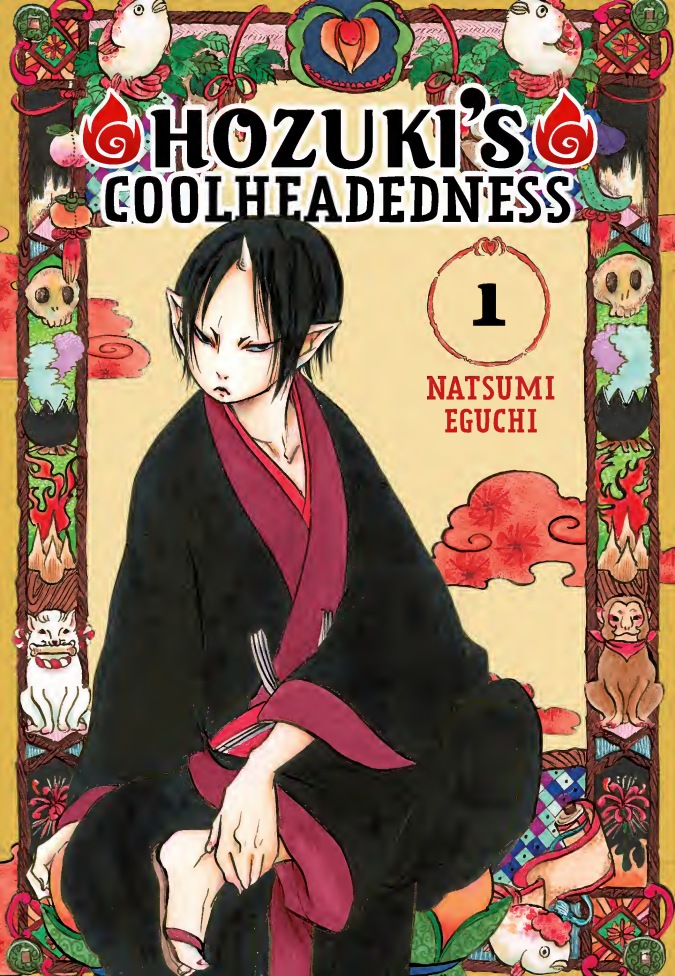
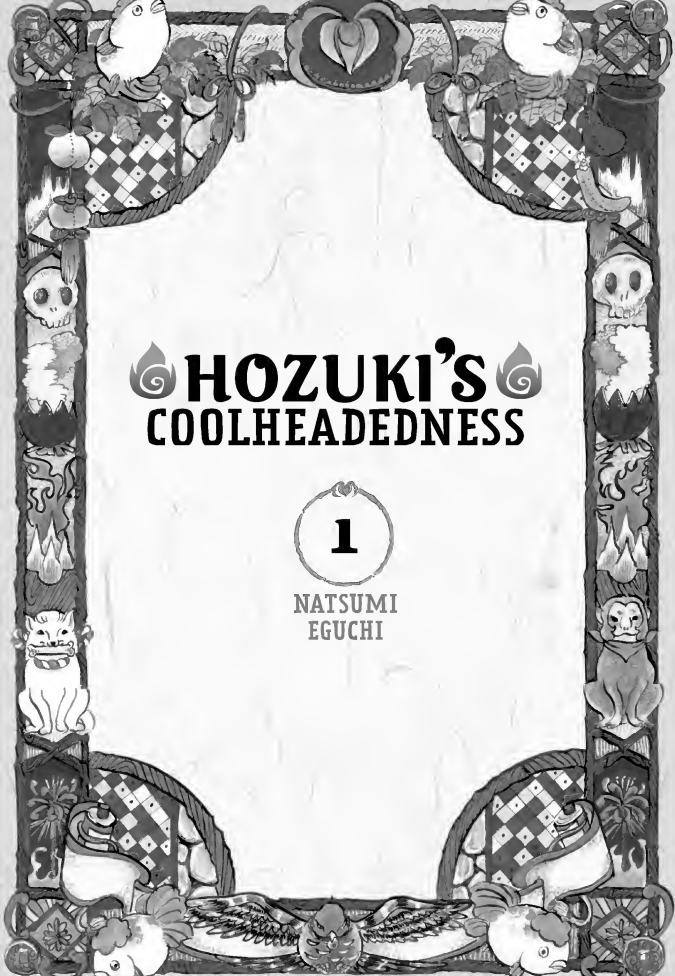




HOZUKI'S COOLHEADEDNESS

1

NATSUMI
EGUCHI



HOZUKI'S COOLHEADEDNESS

1

NATSUMI
EGUCHI



🔥 CHAPTER 1 **A DEMON VS. HIS ARCH-NEMESIS** 3

🔥 CHAPTER 2 **SHIRO AND DAILY ENDEAVORS** 23

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🔥 CHAPTER 6 **OGRES, UNDERWEAR, AND CRABS** 91

🔥 BONUS CHAPTER

HELL AFFAIRS AND THIS AND THAT 109

※ ATTENTION:

THIS MANGA IS A WORK OF FICTION, BUT HELL MIGHT ACTUALLY EXIST. BE CAUTIOUS OF HOW YOU ACT DURING LIFE.





...WHICH ARE FURTHER DIVIDED INTO 272 SUB-DIVISIONS.

HELL, AS WE KNOW IT...



IN THE AFTERLIFE, THERE EXISTS HEAVEN AND HELL.



BE IT IN LIFE OR THE AFTERLIFE, EVERY GOVERNMENT REQUIRES A CALM PROBLEM-SOLVER BEHIND THE SCENES.

HOWEVER ...

...HAVE PLACED THE AFTER-LIFE IN A STATE OF UNPRECEDENTED TURMOIL.

THE POST-WAR POPULATION BOOM ...

...ALONG WITH THE INCREASE OF MALICIOUS SPIRITS (SUCH AS SADAKO) ...

* SADAKO: SPIRIT POPULARIZED BY THE RING SERIES

...SUCH HEROES OF THE SHADOWS ARE FAR MORE RARE THAN CHARISMATIC FIGURES.

大数

無量

CHAPTER 1 ⑥

A DEMON VS HIS ARCH-NEMESIS

寂靜

涅槃

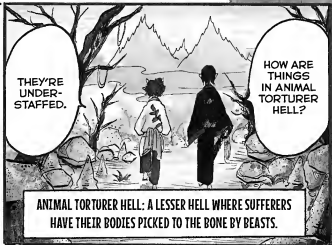




EVERY-
THING
CHECKS
OUT AT
MT. PIN-
CUSHION.



HEAVEN'S HO-
SHANGRI- ZUKI-
LA SENT A SA-
REQUEST MA!
FOR MORE
MAN-
POWER!



THEY'RE
UNDER-
STAFFED.

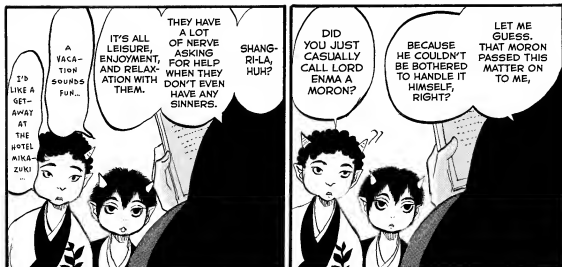
HOW ARE
THINGS
IN ANIMAL
TORTURER
HELL?

ANIMAL TORTURER HELL: A LESSER HELL WHERE SUFFERERS
HAVE THEIR BODIES PICKED TO THE BONE BY BEASTS.



HEY! WE'RE
IN THE
MIDDLE OF
SOMETHING.
DON'T
BUTT IN!

WE CAN'T BE
EXPECTED TO PICK
UP THE SLACK FOR
HEAVEN, TOO.



LIKE I SAID!



AAAAGH!

IS THAT
THE ONLY
THING
YOU
KNOW
HOW TO
SAY?

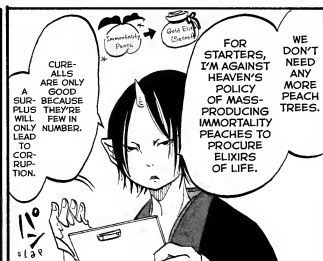
YOU
BY-THE-
BOOK
LACKEY!

YOU
NEED TO
TAKE IT UP
WITH THE
FRONTDESK
FIRST AND—

I
CAN'T
DO THAT,
SIR!

BRING
ME YOUR
TOUGHEST
GUY!





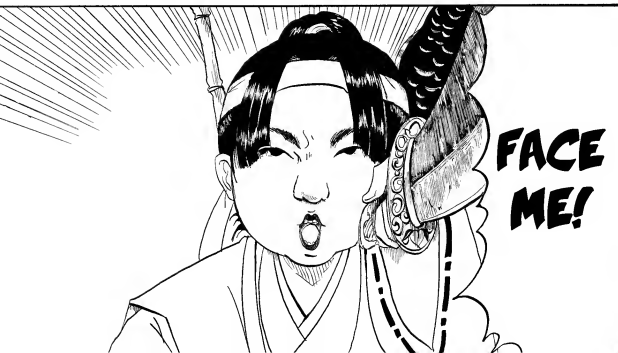
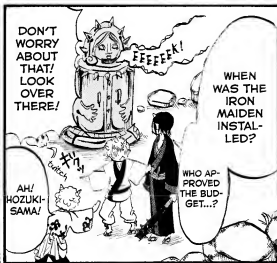


* A FESTIVAL IN WHICH LOVED ONES HONOR THE DEAD WITH OFFERINGS AND DANCE.





* A JAPANESE FOLKLORE HERO, BORN FROM A PEACH AND SLAYER OF OGRES.









VERY DELICATE.

HE'S BEING ODDLY DELICATE ABOUT HIS WAYS.

CAN YOU DO ANYTHING ABOUT HIM?

HO-ZUKI-SAMA,

STOP CALLING ME DELICATE!

What am I, some country bumpkin?



OR ARE YOU TOO AFRAID TO FACE ME?

I CHALLENGE YOU TO A DUEL, DEMON.



DON'T JUST CALMLY ASSESS THE SITUATION, OGRE!

IN OTHER WORDS, YOU'RE LIKE THE ONLY SPORTS-MINDED GUY IN THE OFFICE WHO'S CONSTANTLY ANNOYING HIS COWORKERS.

It's not like he's a kind guy... maybe... Don't know what to do.

I'M A DEMON.



HMPH! HOW DISTINGUISHED?

HOZUKI-SAMA IS A VERY DISTINGUISHED PERSON!

HEY! YOU DON'T KNOW WHO YOU'RE TALKING TO!



I'M MORE LIKE CHIEF SECRETARY. I'M NO ONE, REALLY.



I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT.

HE'S THE FIRST ADVISOR TO KING ENMA!

HE'S TOP DOG OF ALL DEMONS!



DAMN IT ALL!
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, MY MOTHER-- I MEAN, MY GRANDMOTHER?!

PLUS YOU'RE REALLY NO MORE THAN A DRIFTER NOW. WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO SETTLE DOWN?

UNLIKE THOSE THUGS ON OGRE ISLAND, WE WORK OURSELVES TO THE BONE HERE.
I HAVE NO INTENTION OF LOSING TO YOU.

* MOMOTARO ONLY HAS AN ADOPTED GRANDMOTHER.



ENOUGH TALK! LET'S SETTLE THIS WITH OUR FISTS!



EVEN YOUR OUTRAGE IS OLD-FASHIONED...

WELL, HE IS FROM THE MUROMACHI ERA.

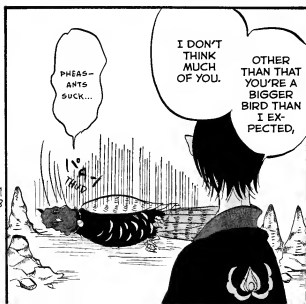
HEED MY WORDS! YOU WILL KNOW MY WRATH AT YOUR PERIL!

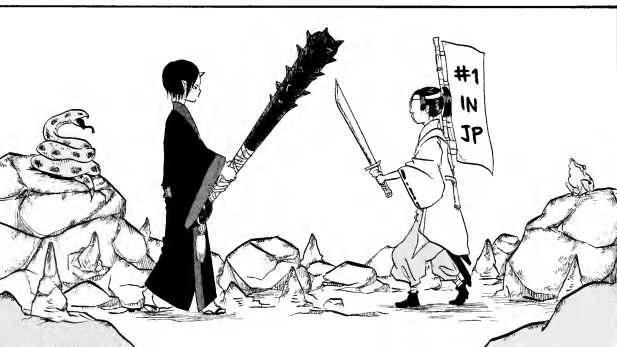


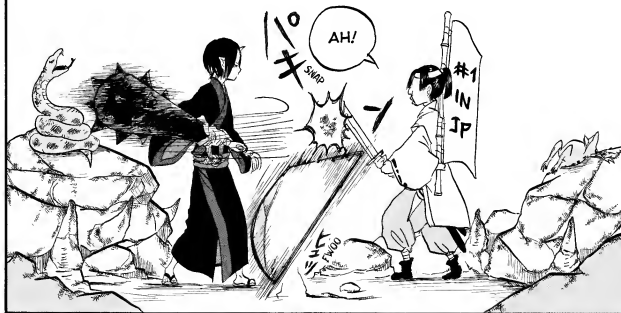


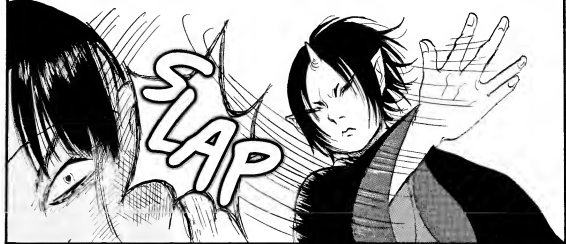
* MASCOT FEATURED IN COMMERCIALS.



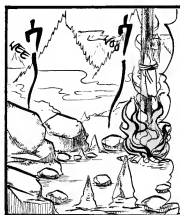








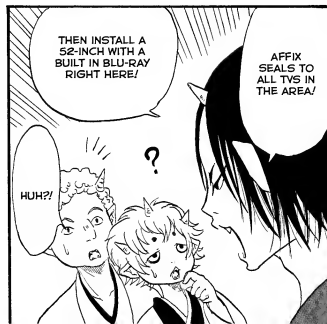
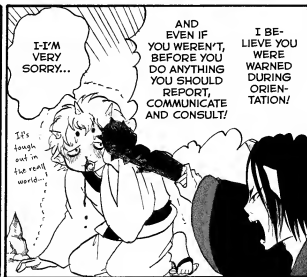


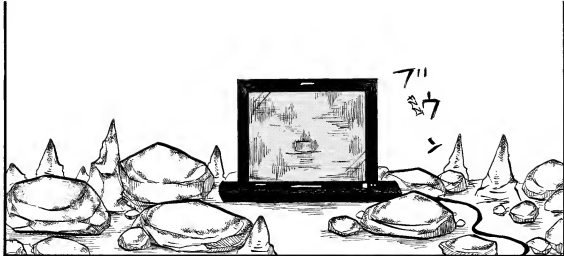


* A PORTABLE TV BROADCAST TUNER.

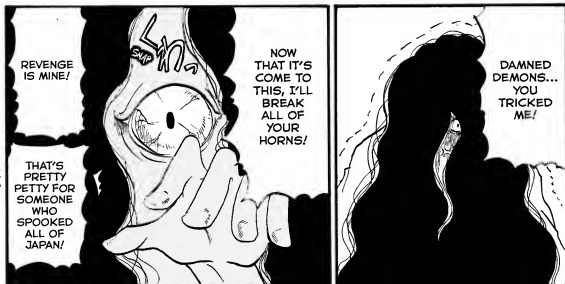


CHAPTER 2
SHIRO AND DAILY ENDEAVORS



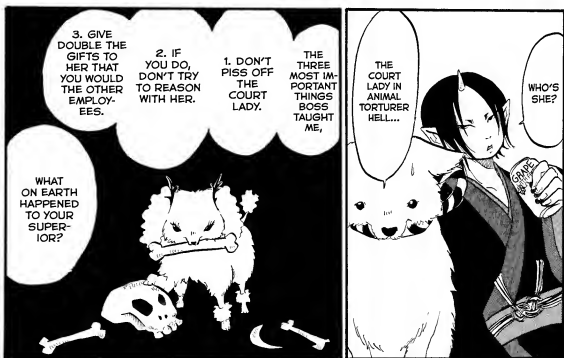


* AN EIGHT-HEADED SERPENT OF
LEGEND TEMPTED WITH SAKÉ.













LORD
ENMA, THE
INTRODUCTIONS...

AGAIN!

PAW!



GOOD
BOY! AS
I'D EXPECT
FROM MOMO-
TARO'S OLD
COMRADE!

LAY!

KING
...



HERE,
BOY!
COME
HERE!

OH, YOU
HAVEN'T
MET YET,
HUH? LET
ME INTRO-
DUCE...

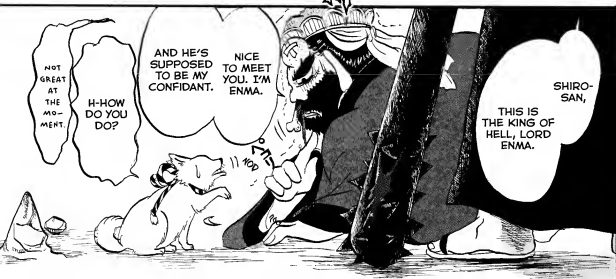
HOW
CUTE!
HE'S ALL
WHITE!



IMITATE
INOKI!

LET'S
TRY A
HARDER
ONE
NOW!

* ANTONIO INOKI, A JAPANESE WRESTLER, POLITICIAN
AND TALENT WHOSE SIGNATURE MOVE IS A SLAP.



NOT
GREAT
AT THE
MO-
MENT.

H-HOW
DO YOU
DO?

AND HE'S
SUPPOSED
TO BE MY
CONFIDANT.

NICE
TO MEET
YOU. I'M
ENMA.

SHIRO-
SAN,

THIS IS
THE KING OF
HELL, LORD
ENMA.



CANINES HAVE AN INNATE ABILITY TO SENSE POWER
BALANCES AND DETERMINE WHO IS THE BOSS,
REFLECTED IN THEIR BEHAVIOR.



BORDERLINE BETWEEN JAPAN & CHINA

HANDEDA

REALM OF THE GODS

PURE LAND

ORIGINALLY JAPAN WAS SPLIT INTO JUST TWO REALMS: LIFE AND THE AFTERLIFE.

SO THE DEITIES CONGREGATED TO FORMULATE A PLAN OF ACTION.

THE AFTER-LIFE KNOWN AS YOMI AT THE TIME WAS PLUNGED INTO CHAOS DUE TO THE INCREASING NUMBER OF DEAD.

HOWEVER, EONS AGO,

AS SUCH,

THE REALMS WERE SPLIT INTO THREE, LIFE, HEAVEN AND HELL, WHICH STILL HOLDS TO THIS DAY.

IKEDUKURO

GOZUKU-1

TOKYO TOWER

SHANGHAI-1A

FUJI

NAGAYA CASTLE

AH! IT'S IKEBUKURO STATION!

THAT PLACE HAS SO MANY EXITS IT'S MORE COMPLICATED THAN AN FF DUNGEON.

REPETITION HELL

BLACK ROOF HELL

GOSSIPING HELL

SCREAMING HELL

AS SUCH, JAPAN'S AFTERLIFE IS NOW QUITE COMPLICATED.

MUCH LIKE IKEBUKURO STATION.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF HELL WAS DECIDED BY BORROWING IDEAS FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES SUCH AS INDIA AND CHINA.

YES, YES, AS I WAS SAYING...

DEATH SCREAMING HELL

SCREAMING HELL

GREEN SCREAMING HELL

WELL, WHEN YOU COMPARE HEAVEN AND HELL...

THE FURNACE HELL

PAT
TO
i

HELL
IS QUITE
LARGE.

PLUS, EVEN
MORE SPACE
IS NEEDED TO
CARRY OUT
THE VARIOUS
MEANS OF
PUNISHMENT.

WE NEED A
SUFFICIENT
AMOUNT OF
SPACE TO
STORE
EVERYONE.

BECAUSE
THE JUDGMENT
PROCESS FOR
THE DEAD IS
ABSRDLY
LONG.

ACCORDING TO BUDDHISM, THE TRIALS FOR DEAD
SPIRITS END ON THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF ONE'S DEATH.

THAT IT IS.

BUT
WHY?

DO YOU
UNDERSTAND
NOW?

BUT I
GUESS MY
RANK
HASN'T
CHANGED
...

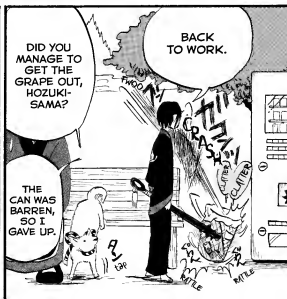
WOW,
ENMA-
SAMA!

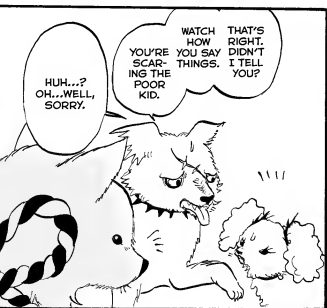
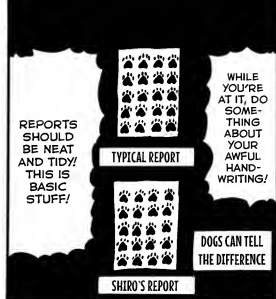
YOU'RE
A BIG
SHOT!

AMONG
THEM BEING
LORD ENMA,
THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF HELL.

1. Lord Shinko
2. Lord Shoko
3. Lord Sotei
4. Lord Gokan
5. Lord Enma
6. Lord Henjo
7. Lord Taizan
8. Lord Byodo
9. Lord Toshi
10. Lord Godofenrin

EACH
AND EVERY
TRIAL IS
OVERSEEN
BY THE
TEN KINGS.

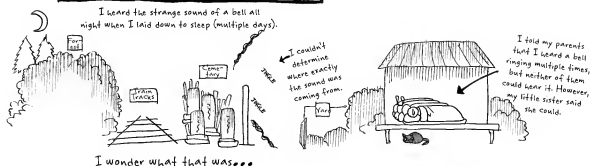




"A not so scary, but intriguing tale."

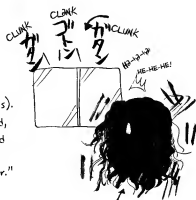
Though I'm writing a story about spirits and hell, I don't have spiritual powers or anything. Rather, spirits scare the bajeezus out of me, so I hope to never encounter them in my lifetime. However I have had a few peculiar experiences in my years.

1. At a certain countryside home during grade school...



2. During high school, at a certain prep school...

There were train tracks just outside the window. Whenever a train passed by I could hear the sound of children mixed in with the train noises (multiple occasions). This time around half the class could hear what I heard, while the other half didn't. It turns out there was an old myth in the prep school which foretold that "whomever hears the voices will pass their entrance exams that year." In actuality, a creepy number of people who said they heard the voices passed their exams, including myself.



There are many more tales where those came from, but I'll save them for another time.

Natural perm. So crazy that when I saw my own reflection in the mirror one night, I seriously thought I saw a ghost.

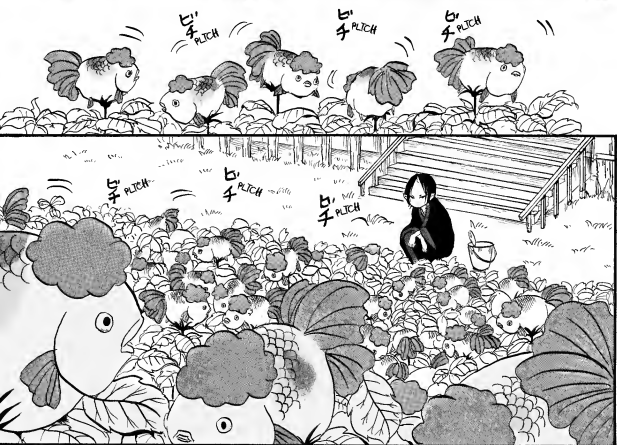
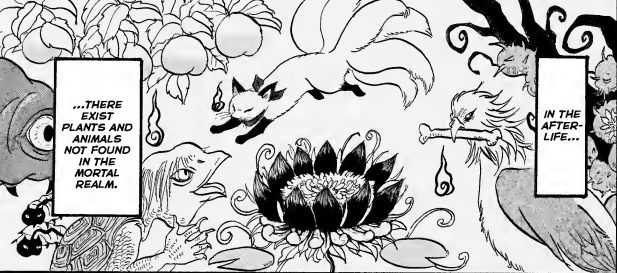


Hozuki



Hozuki seems short next to the giant Lord Enma, but he's actually supposed to be about 6'1". Likewise, I meant him to seem relatively brawny, but when placed next to Enma he seems more like Satsuki standing next to Totoro. I wanted to draw Hozuki here in a way that would better show his build. →



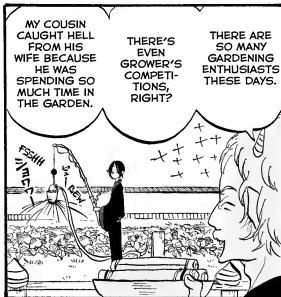


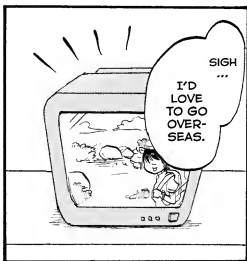
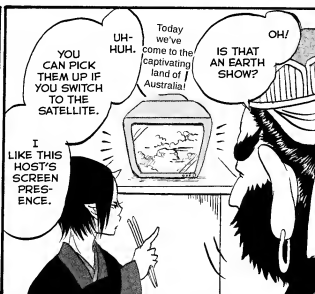


CHAPTER 3

DISCOVERY OF HELL'S MYSTERIES





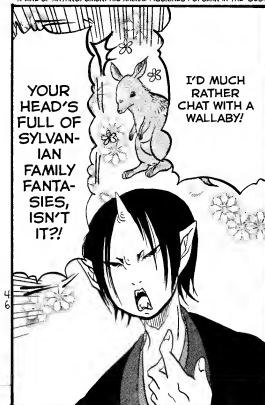


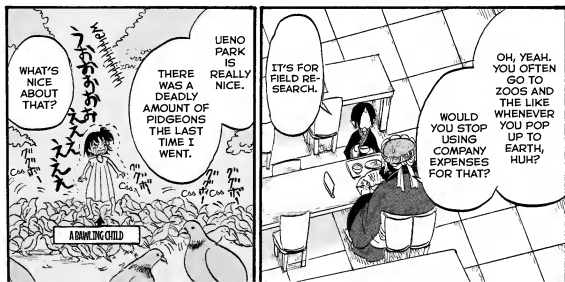
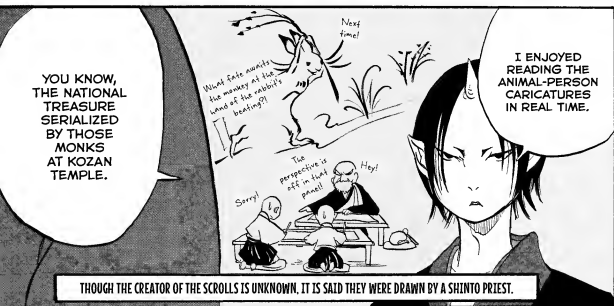
* MASCOT FOR A JAPANESE TV PROGRAM, DISCOVERY OF THE WORLD'S MYSTERIES.





* A LINE OF ANTHROPOMORPHIC ANIMAL FIGURINES POPULAR IN THE '80S.





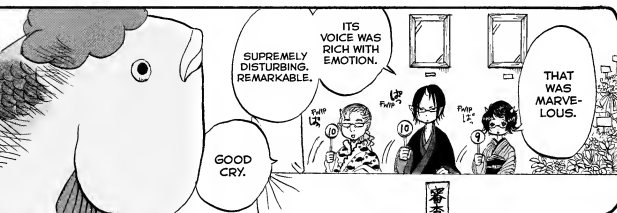
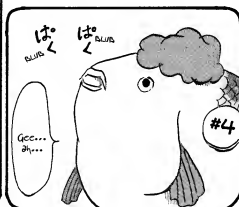


* PEN NAME OF MASANORI HATA, JAPANESE ZOOLOGIST AND FILMMAKER.



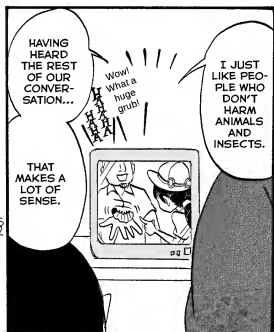


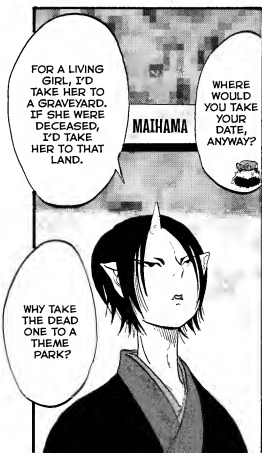




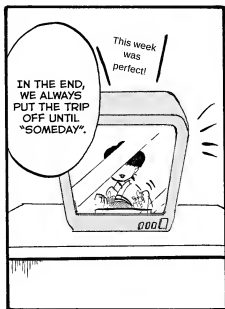
Judges

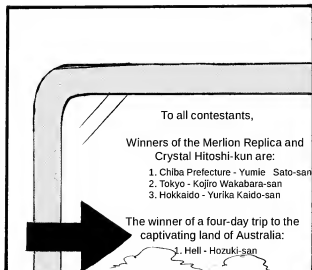












...



GOOD
WORK.

THAT'S
RIGHT. YOU
DO MEDICINAL
RESEARCH
ON THE SIDE,
DON'T YOU?

I NEED
TO PAY A
VISIT TO
SHANGRI-
LA.

OH.

GO
BALD
YOUR-
SELF.

IT
SEEMS
THE MED-
ICINE I
ORDERED
IS READY.

L-LIKE
THESE
LOCKS
WOULD
LEAVE
ME...

I PULLED
AN ALL-
NIGHTER...

WHAT'S
WRONG,
HOZUKI-
KUN?

THAT'S
NO GOOD.
YOU'LL GO
BALD IF YOU
DON'T GET
PROPER
REST.

YOU TWO
SHARE
A LOT IN
COMMON.
NOT JUST
YOUR FACE,
BUT YOUR
SHREWD-
NESS, TOO.



IF YOU'RE
PICKING UP
MEDICINE, THEN
YOU'LL PROBABLY
RUN INTO HAKU-
TAKU-KUN,
HUH?

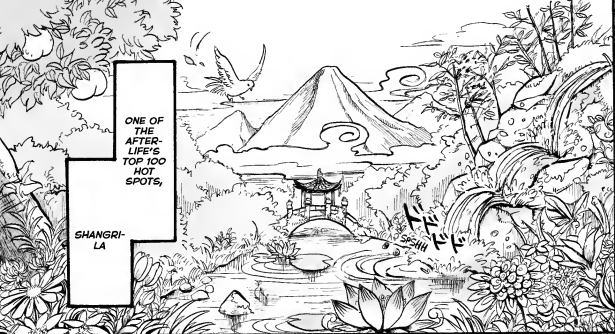
I GET
THAT A LOT,
BUT IT NEVER
STOPS BEING
INSULTING.

YOU
KNOW,



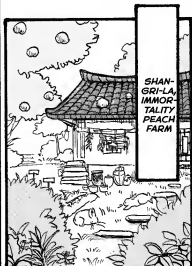
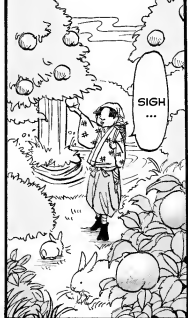
 CHAPTER 4
HAKUTAKU





* A TYPE OF STEAMED BUN FROM THE JIANGNAN REGION OF CHINA.





OW!



YOU
LOOK LIKE
A SHACHI-
HOKO.

GIRLS, HUH?
TALK
ABOUT
SCARY.

* AN ANIMAL FROM JAPANESE FOLKLORE WITH
THE HEAD OF A TIGER AND THE BODY OF A CARP.

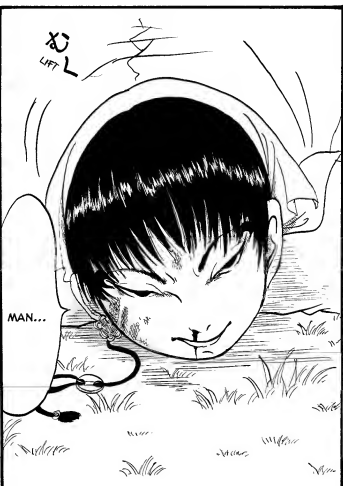


SURE
...

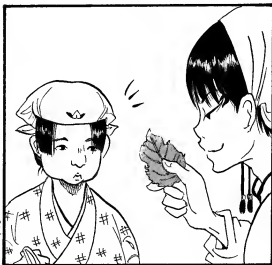
MUCH
OBLIG-
ED.

XIE XIE.
DID YOU
PICK
THEM?

IMMOR-
TALITY OH!
PEA-
CHES?



MAN...

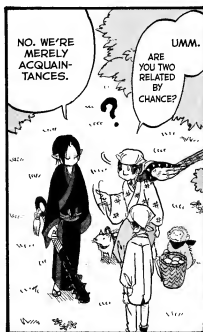
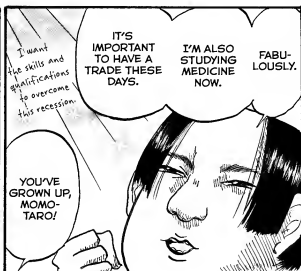


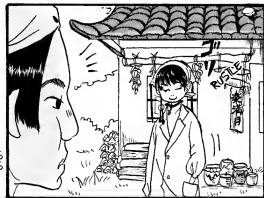
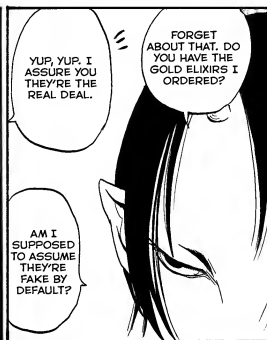


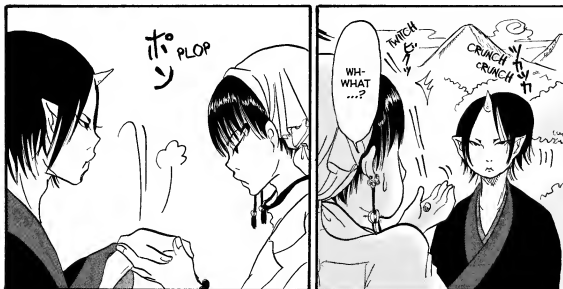


* REFERENCE TO THE SETSUBUN FESTIVAL WHERE PEOPLE THROW BEANS TO WARD OFF DEMONS.



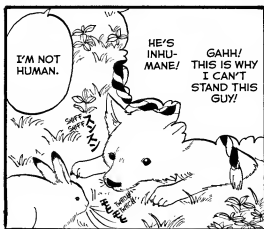


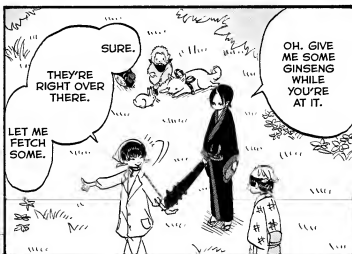






* REFERENCE TO THE MOVIE, CASTLE IN THE SKY

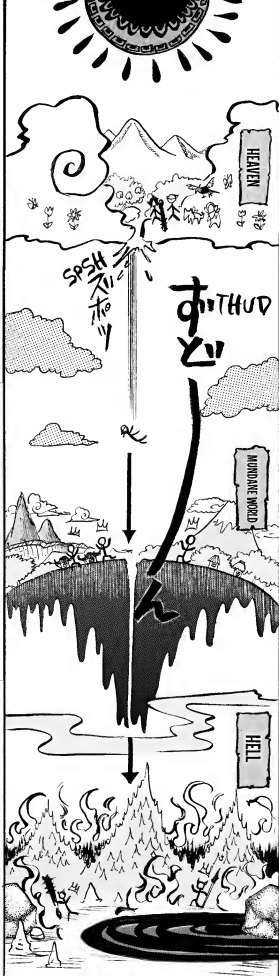








* ANOTHER CASTLE IN THE SKY REFERENCE.



DO YOU WORK FOR LONDON HEARTS OR SOME-THING?!

CONSIDER IT AN HONOR TO FALL THROUGH IT.

I STAYED UP ALL NIGHT DIGGING IT MYSELF FOR SIX HOURS.

CLANG

Get to work! You sure have a lot of free time for someone who says they're always busy!

DO YOU WORK FOR LONDON HEARTS OR SOME-THING?!

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Get to work! You sure have a lot of free time for someone who says they're always busy!

DO YOU WORK FOR LONDON HEARTS OR SOME-THING?!

CONSIDER IT AN HONOR TO FALL THROUGH IT.

I STAYED UP ALL NIGHT DIGGING IT MYSELF FOR SIX HOURS.

CLANG

Get to work! You sure have a lot of free time for someone who says they're always busy!

DO YOU WORK FOR LONDON HEARTS OR SOME-THING?!

CONSIDER IT AN HONOR TO FALL THROUGH IT.

I STAYED UP ALL NIGHT DIGGING IT MYSELF FOR SIX HOURS.

CLANG

Get to work! You sure have a lot of free time for someone who says they're always busy!

WEIRD HOW
PEOPLE OF A
SIMILAR NATURE
OFTEN BUTT
HEADS...

CHAPTER FOUR - END

PAY FOR THE DRUGS AND GO BACK TO HELL, DAMN IT!

WHAP WHAP

IT WAS WORTH STAYING UP ALL NIGHT FOR.

IF YOU WERE HUMAN, YOU WOULD HAVE GONE TO MASS SKEWERING HELL LONG AGO.

MASS SKEWERING HELL: A LESSER HELL WHERE THOSE WHO LIVE IN DEBAUCHERY GO.

PAY FOR THE DRUGS AND GO BACK TO HELL, DAMN IT!

WHAP WHAP

IT WAS WORTH STAYING UP ALL NIGHT FOR.

IF YOU WERE HUMAN, YOU WOULD HAVE GONE TO MASS SKEWERING HELL LONG AGO.

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PAY FOR THE DRUGS AND GO BACK TO HELL, DAMN IT!

WHAP WHAP

IT WAS WORTH STAYING UP ALL NIGHT FOR.

IF YOU WERE HUMAN, YOU WOULD HAVE GONE TO MASS SKEWERING HELL LONG AGO.

MASS SKEWERING HELL: A LESSER HELL WHERE THOSE WHO LIVE IN DEBAUCHERY GO.

Hakutaku

A well known yokai among fans of spiritual lore. I collected Yokai Netsuke (the kind packed in with snacks) as a student but never managed to get my hands on Hakutaku or the Kappa. In my desperation, I even dragged my parents into my search but was only left with this silly memory.



I kept them all in a large cookie container and often looked at my collection.



Line one and two of the Netsuke sold for 200 yen (about 2 USD) per box and the figure inside was random.

Candy



I think line two's secret character might have been Hakutaku, but my memory is vague.

Line one's secret character was the esteemed Lord Enma.



I remember getting six Muramatsu figures in a row.

Never too old to get busy, huh?



The origin of Momotaro's birth actually stems from a legend in which an old couple ate a peach that flowed downstream and granted them their youth again. They went on to have a child together.



Fun With Painting





CHAPTER 5 WHAT BIRTHED THEIR DISCORD?





YOU'RE TOO KIND.

YOU'RE A CUTIE, TOO.



THAT'S REALLY SOMETHING. A LOT OF GIRLS DREAM OF THAT POSITION.

WOW!
YOU'RE AMATE-RASU'S ATTENDANT, HUH?

* AMATERASU: GOD OF THE SUN AND UNIVERSE.



AH! OKO-CHAN! WELCOME!

WE WON'T

LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU BREAK UP.

REALLY? THAT'S TOO BAD.

RATTLE RATTLE
ガラガラ



S-SORRY! I HAVE A BOYFRIEND.

SAY, GOT ANY PLANS LATER?

I HAPPEN TO BE FREE TONIGHT.



I GUESS THERE REALLY ARE GUYS WHO HIT ON ANYTHING THAT MOVES.





HE
HURT
HIMSELF...

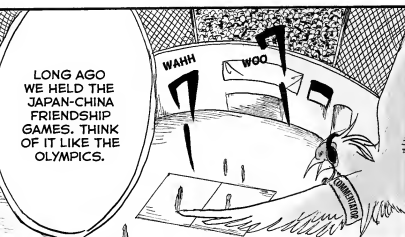
00.

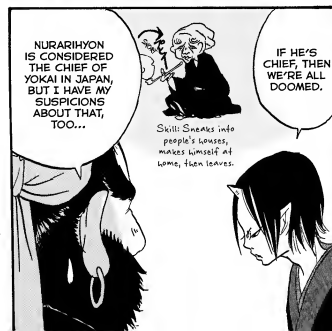
MY
APOLOGIES.
DON'T MIND
ME.

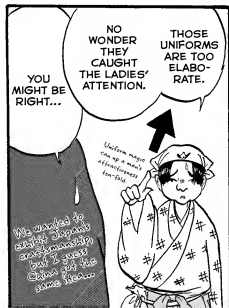
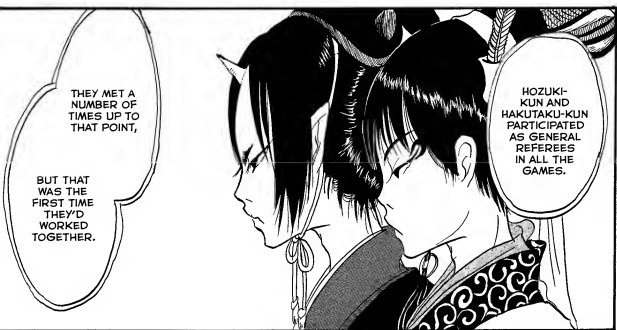
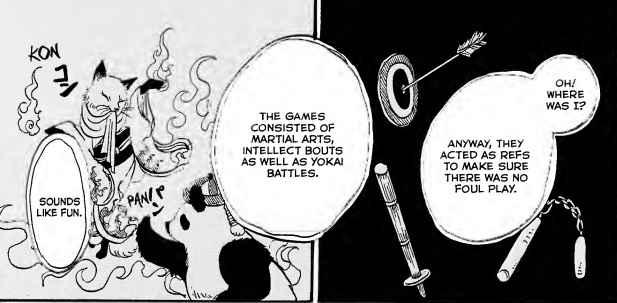
Rob...



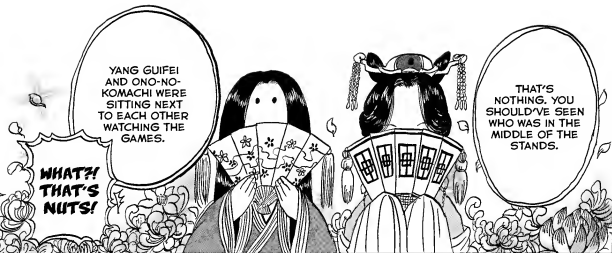










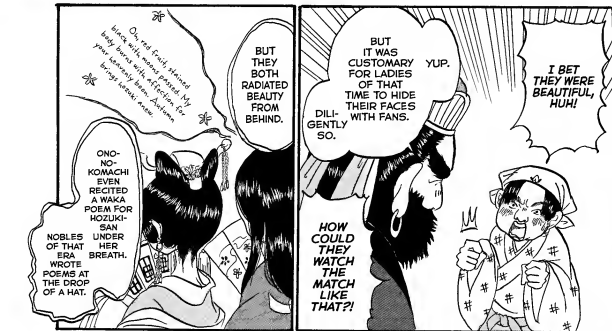


YANG GUIFEI
AND ONO-NO-
KOMACHI WERE
SITTING NEXT
TO EACH OTHER
WATCHING THE
GAMES.

**WHAT?
THAT'S
NUTS!**

THAT'S
NOTHING, YOU
SHOULD'VE SEEN
WHO WAS IN THE
MIDDLE OF THE
STANDS.

* YANG GUIFEI, IMPERIAL CONSORT, AND ONO-NO-KOMACHI, WAKA POET,
BOTH KNOWN FOR THEIR OTHERWORLDLY BEAUTY.



Oh, red fruit, stained
brave with moon, paired. My
body burns with affection for
your heavenly love. Autumn
brings sweetest love.

BUT
THEY
BOTH
RADIATED
BEAUTY
FROM
BEHIND.

BUT
IT WAS
CUSTOMARY
FOR LADIES
OF THAT
TIME TO HIDE
THEIR FACES
WITH FANS.
DILI-
GENTLY
SO.

YUP.

I BET
THEY WERE
BEAUTIFUL,
HUH!

ONO-
NO-
KOMACHI
EVEN
RECITED
A WAKA
POEM FOR
HOZUKI-
SAN UNDER
HER
BREATH.

NOBLES
OF THAT
ERA
WROTE
POEMS AT
THE DROP
OF A HAT.

HOW
COULD
THEY
WATCH
THE
MATCH
LIKE
THAT?!



OH!
SORRY.

...
BUT WHAT
EXACTLY
HAPPENED
BETWEEN
HOZUKI-
SAN AND
HAKUTAKU-
SAMA?

THIS
TRIP
DOWN
MEMORY
LANE IS
GREAT AND
ALL...

UMM...







* FAMOUS FIST OF THE NORTH STAR DEATH SOUND.

Abeshil





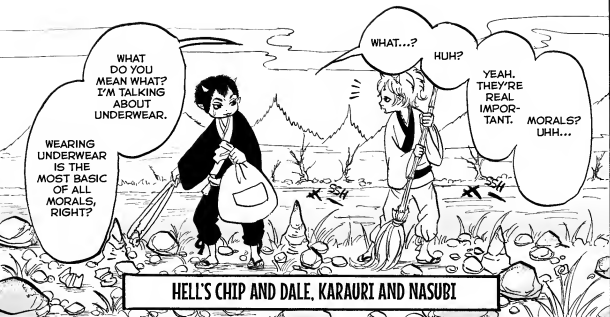


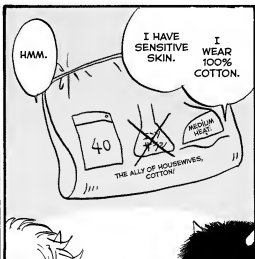


CHAPTER 6

OGRES, UNDERWEAR, AND CRABS

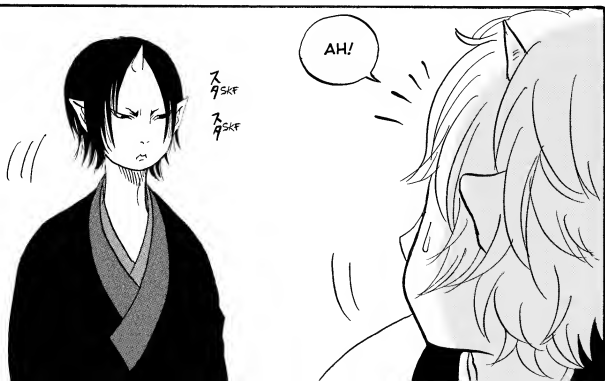
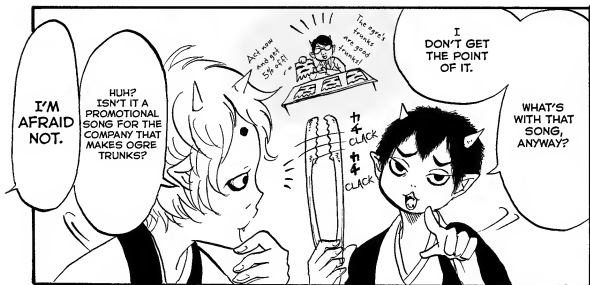


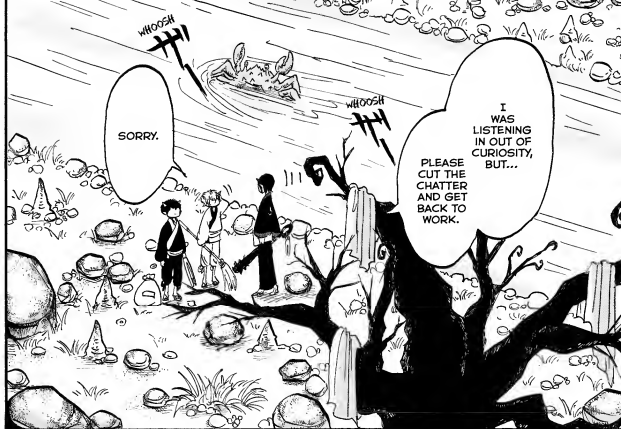




* BOTH ARE WOMEN'S LINGERIE COMPANIES.







SORRY.

I WAS LISTENING IN OUT OF CURIOSITY, BUT... PLEASE CUT THE CHATTER AND GET BACK TO WORK.



HUH. SO IT'S NOT A HELL ORIGINAL, AFTER ALL.

Gradiel

Apparently it was made to promote a mountain cable car.

THE WORDS FUNICULI FUNICULA ARE MEANT TO STIR ENTHUSIASM.



THAT SONG WAS ORIGINALLY A CAZONE FROM SOUTHERN ITALY.

THE JAPANESE LYRICS WERE ADDED LATER

DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE SONG CAME FROM, HOZUKI-SAMA?

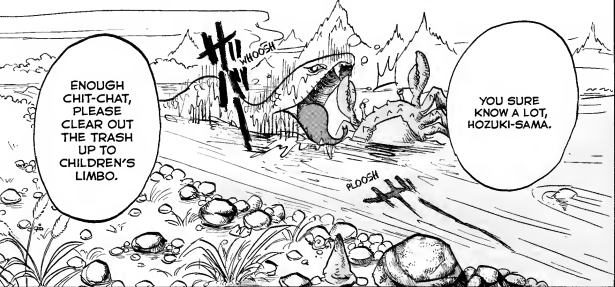


OH!

I'VE HEARD OF THAT!

THE TITLE IS FUNICULI FUNICULA.

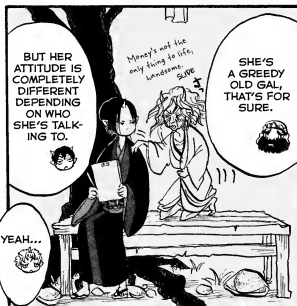
Funiculi funiculi



* CURRENCY USED FOR PASSAGE DOWN THE SANZU RIVER.





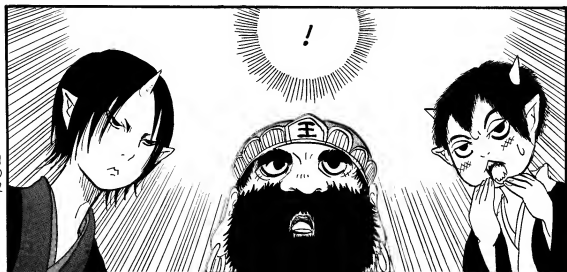
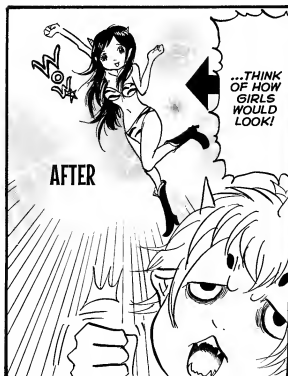






* FUNDOSHI: A TYPE OF TRADITIONAL JAPANESE UNDERGARMENT.





Darling,
I won't
forgive
cheating!

...
IS OUT
OF THE
QUES-
TION.

SHE
ISN'T A
DEMON,
ANYWAY.

CRICKLE
クリクル

SNIP
スニプ

THAT
SURE
SOUNDS
GLAMOR-
OUS.

OH,
MAN...

UNFORTUNATELY,
THAT LOOK...

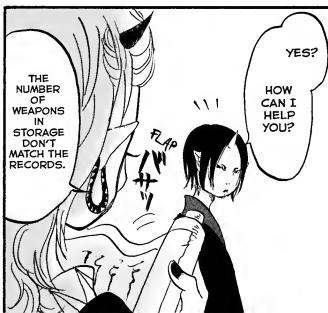
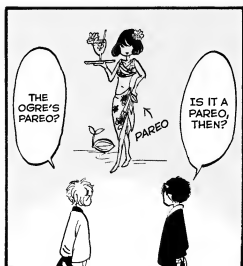
I
THINK
THAT'S A
DIFFERENT
ISSUE.

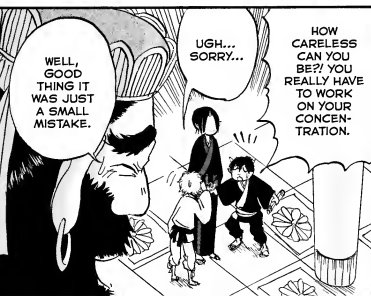
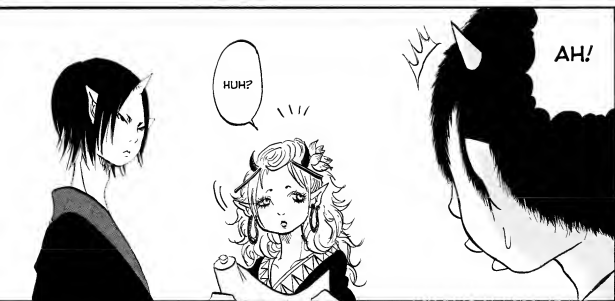
AND THE
OLD HAG IS
BASICALLY
NAKED,
BUT THAT
HAS THE
OPPOSITE
EFFECT.

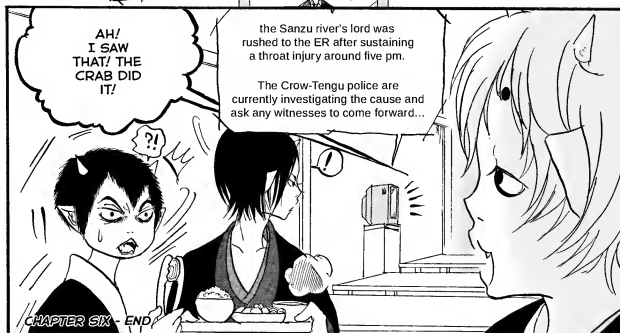
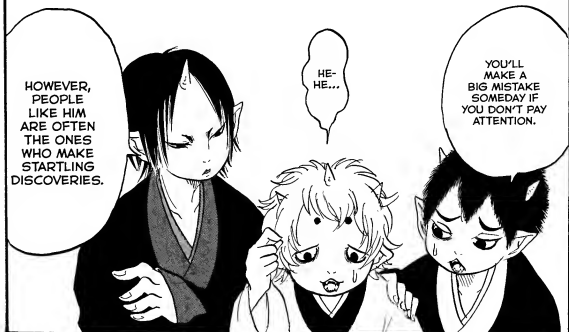
I
GUESS
THAT'S
TRUE...

NOT TO
MENTION
YOU'D GET
BORED OF
SEEING THAT
BEFORE
LONG.

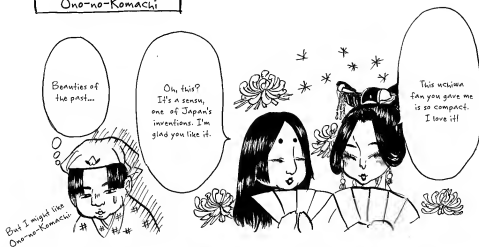
One how the
change from
summer to
fall fashion is
refreshing.







Yang Guifei &
Ono-no-Komachi



I got a lot of bunk from family and friends about this. Apparently it would have been odd for ladies of that time to hold sensu folding fans. Sorry... Please assume the above was the case.

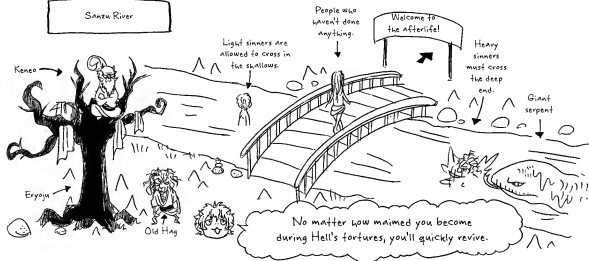
Prince Shotoku



Who am I?
Why did you compliment me at the end? How awkward.

This is the portrait we think to be Prince Shotoku. Recently there have been theories that claim otherwise, but I wonder what the case really is. I had a chance to see the original painting at a museum before. It was even larger and more beautiful than I imagined. He looked more prim and proper than I expected.

Sanzu River



"Hell's Affairs and This and That"

I received an honorable mention in the Tetsuya Chiba Award for this work.

Along with it, I included two other stories featuring different protagonists in a three-chapter omnibus.

Its title at the time was An Extraordinarily Normal Tale.

Until then I sent it to as many magazines as I could, but regrettably fell into a pattern of getting past the first round for small awards, only to have the editor say, "I like it, but..." and nothing come of it.

I planned to look for another job if the same thing happened again, but to think it would lead to my serialization. I'm very grateful.

I was surprised just how much my art has changed since I first drew this story. There are a number of other laughable parts beside the art, but without this story I wouldn't be where I am now so it's close to my heart. I hope you'll read it.

Satan = Goat + Bat +
Bodybuilder

I remember wanting to make easy to understand characters in order to get the theme across in only 15 pages.



His thick fur covers up his nakedness fashionably.

Back then, I got a lot of feedback from people who thought Hozuki was a woman. I tried to increase his masculinity, but it only ended up being a slight difference. Sorry.



HELL'S AFFAIRS AND THIS AND THAT

BONUS CHAPTER







HMPH. I'M
HERE FOR
RECON. IT
DOESN'T
MATTER WHO
SHOWS ME
AROUND.

MY
SUBORDINATE
WILL ACT AS
YOUR GUIDE.

I'D
LOVE TO
SIT DOWN
AND CHAT,
BUT I'M UP
TO MY NECK
IN WORK.



I
ASSURE YOU
HE'S VERY
CAPABLE.

THIS
IS MY
CONFIDANT,
HOZUKI.

OH?

NOW



YOU
DON'T
HAVE
TO TELL
ME
TWICE.

FEEL
FREE
TO TAKE
A LOOK
AT OUR
FACILITIES.



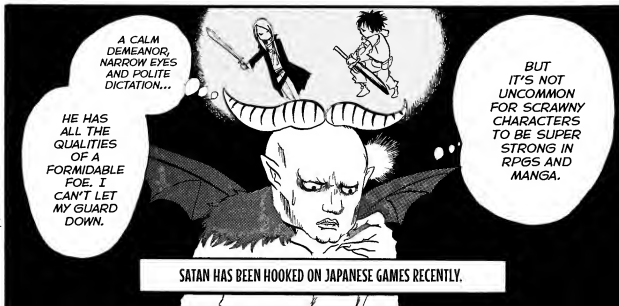
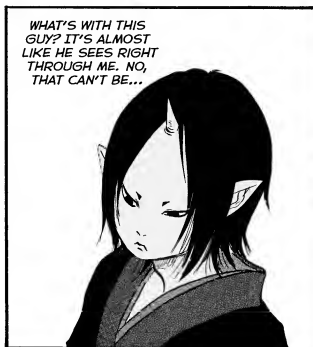
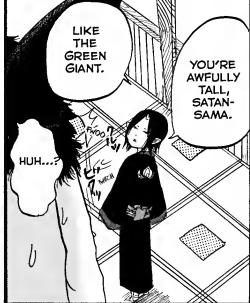
IT'S A
PLEASURE
TO MAKE
YOUR
ACQUAIN-
TANCE.

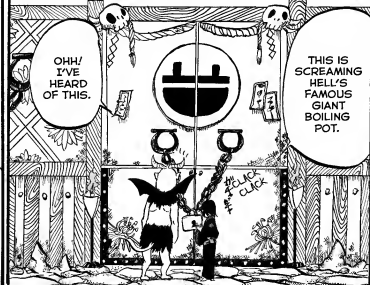
HMM. IT'S
TYPICAL FOR
GOVERNMENT
OFFICIALS
TO HAVE
SKILLED
UNDERLINGS.
I'LL KEEP AN
EYE ON HIM,
TOO.

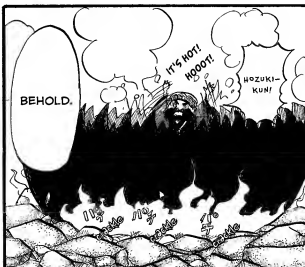


HOZUKI-
KUN, SEE
THAT OUR
GUEST
IS WELL
ACCOM-
MODATED.

YES,
SIR.









I'M
SORRY!
PLEASE
HELP
ME!

IT
SEEMS
THE TIME
HAS COME
FOR LORD
ENMA TO
PAY THE
PIPER.



THERE
WON'T BE
A FUTURE
AT THIS
RATE! GET
OVER HERE
AND HELP
ME!

WHAT A
SLOVENLY
SIGHT TO
SHOW OUR
GUEST. DO
YOUR BEST
TO GET OUT
YOURSELF
FOR THE
FUTURE.



UGH...
SORRY.
I SLIPPED.

THIS
SHOULD
MAKE
FOR
SOME
GOOD
ENMA
BROTH.

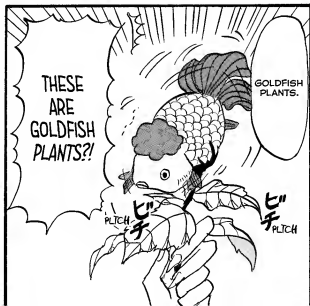
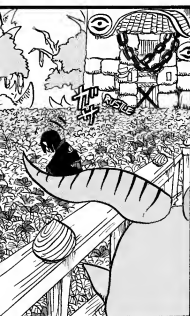
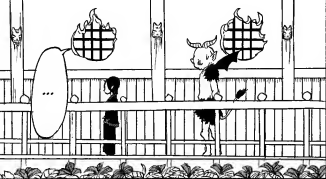
...HIS
SUBORDINATES
ARE CRAZY!
I'D CRY IF MY
UNDERLINGS
TREATED ME
LIKE THAT!
THAT'S WAY
TOO HARSH!

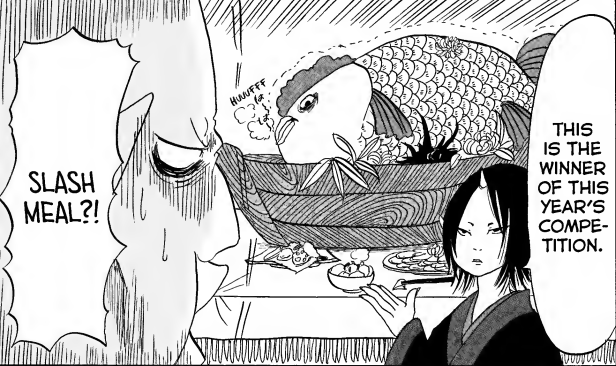


WHOA.
HE'S
TOTALLY
FINE...

WHAT'S
WITH THESE
TWO?! NOT
ONLY DID
ENMA LET
IT SLIDE BY
LIKE IT WAS
NOTHING...







**EEEEEEK!
IT'S A
JAPANESE
ARTISAN!**

DIG IN.

SHIK. **サ**
SHIK. **サ**
SHIK. **サ**
SHIK. **サ**
 **ッ**

しゅばっ しゅばっ

NOW HE'S
CUTTING
A DAIKON
RADISH
INTO AN
AMARYLLIS?!

THERE
ARE
PLENTY
OF
THINGS
I CAN'T
DO.

THAT WAS
TOO FAST,
EVEN FOR A
DEMON!

KANPYO

YOU CAN
DO IT
ALL, HUH,
HOZUKI-
KUN?

* KANPYO: DRIED GOURD.

I'M BEING
OVER-
WHELMED
BY CULTURE
SHOCK!

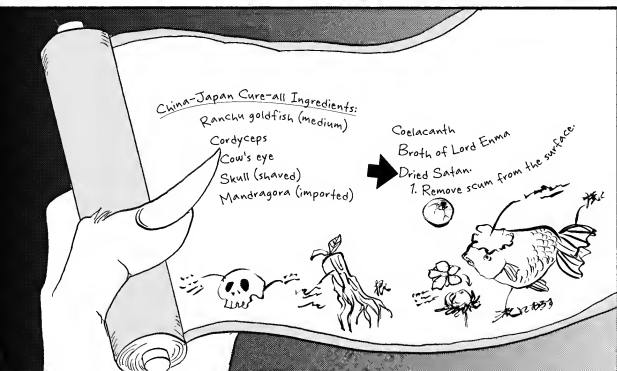
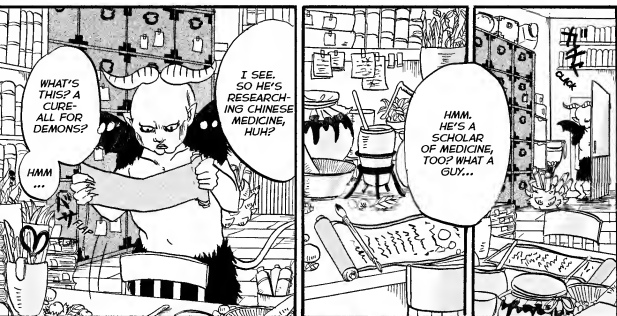
AH!
 NO!
 NO!
 NO!

IT'S
HEALTHY,
TOO...

B-BRAVO 7" 4"

CLATTER
L

HOW
DEXTEROUS!
WHY ARE THE
JAPANESE
SO
NEEDLESSLY
NIMBLE?!



HE'S GONNA TURN ME INTO JERKY!

H-H-H-HE...

Woahhh

HE'S GONNA TURN ME INTO JERKY!

H-H-H-HE... Wohhh~

EEEEEEK!

DO COME AGAIN.

EEEEEEK!

DO COME AGAIN.

OH!
LEAVING
ALREADY?

OH
MY
GOD!

LORD,
PLEASE
WATCH
OVER ME!



THUD ス THUD ス THUD

LIKE HELL
I'LL COME
BACK TO
THIS PLACE!

LORD,
PLEASE
WATCH
OVER ME!



THUD ス THUD ス THUD

LIKE HELL
I'LL COME
BACK TO
THIS PLACE!



EVIL
GENERALLY
ISN'T AWARE
OF ITS OWN
WICKEDNESS,
BUT THIS
TIME IT
WORKED OUT
IN JAPAN'S
FAVOR.



Thank you very much for reading until the end. A lot, but I can't express how glad I am to see the first book published. I'd like to thank all the readers and people who helped me along the way.

As far back as I can remember, I've always been reading books about the afterlife and yokai. Making copies of old picture books and encyclopedias was my hobby. When I had spare time after tests, I'd draw foxes and tanuki in the margins of my answer sheet. Afterward my teacher asked me, "Is this a dog or a cat?", which left me a bit bitter. From then on, I paid even more attention to the different builds and characteristics of animals.

And with the knowledge of those characteristics in hand, I grew to understand that mystical beasts and yokai are mostly combinations or exaggerations of different animals, with some ironically modeled after humans, too. For instance, hannya masks portray the angry face of a woman exaggerated to look demonic and scary. Who knows? Nurarihyon might have been based on someone the creator knew in the neighborhood. I believe that the definition of manga "characters" and expression share the same roots.

Our ancestors used such irony and jokes as a form of self-admonition. "If you do bad things then you'll go to hell." I think that warning is a concentrated form of Japanese wisdom.

...Or so I'd like to say, but my manga isn't so grand as to make such arrogant claims. But I do continue to draw with that idea in mind.

If I may talk about a personal matter for a moment, my grandmother on my father's side passed away shortly before my serialization started. When Hell's Affairs and This and That was published, she told me, "I don't really understand the story but I bought a copy of the magazine." I wonder if she can read this story in the afterlife, too. Would the afterlife's Morning be during the dead of night, I wonder? But even if she read it, I suspect she'd tell me "I don't get it," anyway. I'd like to use this opportunity to express my gratitude to my grandmother. Thank you.

Natsumi Eguchi



IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF HOZUKI'S CHOO!HEADENESS...



STARS OF THE HORROR WORLD, IEMON & OIWA, MAKE AN APPEARANCE!

HELL'S YOTSUYA TAXI KAIDAN

KAKISUKI



LURIO



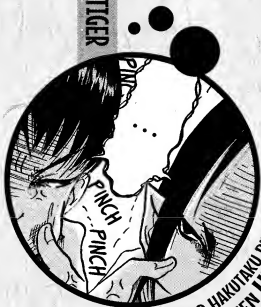
SHIRO



...VISIT HOZUKI'S ROOM!

THREE DEAD ANIMALS!

DUET OF THE DRAGON AND THE TIGER



HOZUKI AND HAKOTAKU BUMP HEADS AT
THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN HEAVEN AND HELL!



HELL IDOL

CLUELESS ABOUT HOZUKI,
HELL'S AIRHEAD IDOL JOINS THE MIX!



HOZUKI PRODUCTIONS!
AN EVEN CRUELER SPORTS FESTIVAL!



A MENTAL SPORTS FESTIVAL



CATPARAZZI

THE WRITER (CAT) OF A
THIRD-RATE GOSSIP MAG
SETS HIS SIGHTS ON
HOZUKI!



"Hell's Affairs and
This and That" chapter 2
is also included!

...THESE SIX CHAPTERS

PLEASE LOOK FORWARD TO...

**HOZUKI'S COOLHEADEDNESS
VOLUME 2 IS NOW ON SALE!**

Hozuki's Cool-headedness 1

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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English digital edition published by Kodansha Advanced Media, LLC,
San Francisco.

www.kodanshacomics.com

ISBN: 9781682334058

Digital Edition: 1.0.0

Translation by Adam Hirsch
Lettering by Alexandra Swanson & Ivan Concepcion
Editing by Alexandra Swanson
YKS Services LLC/SKY Japan, INC.

